

Call for Evidence: Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability of Glasgow college region

GCRB Call for Information

Date Issued: Tuesday 10 November 2020

1. Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board (GCRB) is the regional strategic body (RSB) that is responsible for securing the provision of high-quality fundable further and higher education in Glasgow's colleges. GCRB is also responsible for:
 - Strategic planning of college provision across the Glasgow region;
 - Monitoring of performance; and,
 - Allocation of funding to colleges within the region.
2. We have been asked by Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and Scottish Government to review how best we can fulfil our mission of securing coherent, sustainable and viable provision by post-16 college education bodies in these changing times.
3. We invite interested organisations to submit evidence to help inform and shape our review. We particularly welcome responses from colleges and universities, students and learners representative bodies, industry and employers, local government, equalities interests, unions, quality assessors, professional representative bodies and academies. Annex A lists the key stakeholders we anticipate will be interested in responding to this call for evidence.
4. It would be helpful if you could provide succinct submissions by **18 December 2020**. We would welcome evidence and data that supports your view. You may choose to respond to any aspect of this review; and any or all of the specific questions we pose, as we recognise the inter-connectedness of many of the themes. Please complete the attached respondent information form (Annex B) when submitting your response.
5. We are planning to undertake the review in a number of phases and to elicit views in different ways. This may include further calls for evidence as required.
6. The recent SFC Review of RSBs provided clear evidence that GCRB is successfully and consistently delivering on regional outcomes and the expected benefits of regionalisation. However, SFC identified key challenge points for GCRB and its assigned colleges moving forward, and we are particularly keen to hear how these might be most effectively met.

7. In this first phase of our review we are interested in your views on these six areas in particular:

- What do you think *works well* in the current Glasgow college further and higher education offering arrangements (colleges and RSB) that we should keep in order to secure Glasgow's inclusive social and economic recovery from the current pandemic? How can we best preserve and strengthen those features of college education in Glasgow that we most prize, in a very challenging funding environment?
- What do you think Glasgow's colleges and RSB *should stop doing*, or do differently, in order to contribute effectively to an inclusive social and economic recovery for the Glasgow region? (You may wish to comment on governance, teaching and skills development, sectoral and employer needs and employability, widening access and equalities issues etc.)
- How might *regional partnership working* be strengthened to ensure closer and effective working relationships, both with the regional colleges and regional board, and externally with key regional partners? How best can open and pro-active communication, collaboration and joint-working, joint development and networking and constructive conflict resolution be consistently delivered, particularly given their importance against the context of significant sector challenges post-Covid19?
- *Governance*: SFC's view is that "GCRB's governance arrangements have bedded in and deliver regional benefits and added value for students and other stakeholders, including employers. GCRB has delivered consistently, and well, to respond to needs in Glasgow Region. That said, there are mixed views within the assigned bodies themselves about the additional value being added by the RSB and the cumbersome nature of the four-board arrangement." How best might governance be modelled to deliver the intended coherent regional aims?
- *Funding*: SFC has said: "Agreeing the funding allocations across the three colleges remains challenging for GCRB, despite an efficient approach. Operating within tight timescales following SFC funding allocation decisions and negotiating agreement on key issues between four boards and senior managers has been time-consuming and difficult at times." How best might regional funding be effectively managed to constituent colleges?

- *Structures*: SFC has said: “now is an appropriate stage in development for GCRB to begin conversations to consider further reformation of the structures in Glasgow that will facilitate the continued effective and efficient delivery of education and skills for the Region.” What organisational options could be explored, with a particular view to ensuring delivery of the following:
 - Building on, and securing, pan-regional planning;
 - Further efficiency gains;
 - The financial viability of the constituent colleges;
 - A ‘Glasgow front door’ for students, employers and other stakeholders
 - Other elements which would ensure consolidation and fulfilment of regional and policy objectives.
8. In particular, we are interested in responses which provide clear consideration of, and response to, the following key publications:
- *Coherence and Sustainability: A Review of Scotland’s Colleges and Universities Phase One Report (Scottish Funding Council, 20 October 2020)*
http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/corporatepublications_sfccp052020/Review_of_Coherent_Provision_and_Sustainability_Phase_1_Report.pdf
 - *Review of Regional Strategic Bodies: Glasgow Colleges’ Regional Board (Scottish Funding Council, 20 October 2020)*
http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/corporatepublications_sfccp052020/GCRB_RSB_Review_report.pdf
 - *The College of the Future: The UK-wide final report from the Independent Commission on the College of the Future (ICCF, October 2020)*
<https://www.collegecommission.co.uk/final-report-uk>
 - *The Cumberford-Little Report: One Tertiary System: Agile, Collaborative, Inclusive (February 2020)* <https://view.pagetiger.com/inlhij/1/PDF.pdf>
9. **Please send your response to wendy.odedina@gcrb.ac.uk by 18 December 2020.** We look forward to receiving your views, and thank you very much for your important engagement with this work.

Glasgow Colleges’ Regional Board, November 2020

Stakeholders likely to be interested in responding

- Glasgow region's constituent colleges:
 - City of Glasgow College
 - Glasgow Clyde College
 - Glasgow Kelvin College
- Glasgow region's universities, specialist institutions and other funded bodies
- Audit Scotland, Education Scotland and other relevant bodies
- Enterprise and Skills strategic bodies and agencies
- Student and learner representative bodies
- Staff bodies, Trade Unions
- Employers and industry
- Local authorities, including skills and education partners
- Cultural bodies
- Equalities bodies
- Expert advisors
- Development bodies
- Community and adult learning

Respondent Information Form

Please indicate how you wish your response to be handled and, in particular, whether you are content for your response to be published. If you ask for your response not to be published, we will regard it as confidential, and we will treat it accordingly.

All respondents should be aware that Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and would therefore have to consider any request made to it under the Act for information relating to responses made to this consultation exercise.

Name	
Position	
Organisation	
Contact details	
Which organisation are you officially responding on behalf of?	
I give my consent for my response to be published	
I do not give my consent for my response to be published	

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Issue date: 10 November 2020

Deadline: 18 December 2020

Reference: GCRB Board BM3-A

Summary: This publication invites all interested organisations to submit evidences to help inform the GCRB review of coherent provision and sustainability in Further and Higher Education in the Glasgow college region.

FAO: Colleges and universities, students and learners representative bodies, industry and employers, local government, equalities interests, unions, quality assessors, professional representative bodies and academies

Further information: **Contact:** GCRB Executive
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